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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

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Wayside Gatherings.

A New Year Resolution.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Paul.

A New Year Start.

"In many ways there is a sense of stir and start about us. He must be dull who does not feel it. So when a man starts afresh what his new start ought to do for him is to refresh the deepest principles by which he lives."—Phillips Brooks.

"The Silence of Worship."

We are accustomed to helpful and inspiring words from the Editor of "The Inquirer" but a special word of thanks is due for his leader under the above heading. Many of us dislike that "unseemly rush to the door" immediately the benediction is pronounced—it characterises many congregations. May the following words receive our careful thought: ". . . . . there seem to be two points at least at which the hour of worship should jealously preserve and practise its silences . . . . there should be preparatory quiet, and a 'benedictory' quiet—a time of due attuning of the mind at the beginning of the service, and a time of self-consecration at the end."

Do Americans Exaggerate?

An American writer has recently declared that the most urgent need in the American Churches is for twenty five thousand operations for the excision of clerical adenoids.

True Knowledge.

"The brave only know how to forgive . . . . a coward never forgave; it is not in his nature."—Sterne.

Lovers of Freedom.

"All smokers should be prosecuted as nuisances and the manufacture and sale of tobacco prohibited."—Mr. Bernard Shaw.

Biblical "Knowledge."

Children's examination papers form interesting reading: one boy's paper contained the surprising information that 'first the blade then the ear' referred to the disciple Peter and Malchus. Another records a very humorous rendering of the fourth commandment: it ordained that "Six days shall thy neighbour do all thou hast to do; the seventh thou shalt do no work" and here is one which fond husbands will hardly repeat: "When Adam woke up from his sleep and found Eve by his side he said: my punishment is greater than I can bear."

A Wise Prayer.

"Courage is a proof of our immortality—greater even than 'gardens when the eve is cool.' **Pray for it.** 'Who rise from prayer a better man his prayer is answered.' Be not merely courageous, but light-hearted and gay."—Barrie.

An Indian Testimony.

"The Man to whom I owe most and to whom all India owes most is a Man who never set his foot in India—and that was Christ."—Mr. Ghandi.

A.W.

New Year Greetings.

In the belief that readers will be pleased to receive New Year's greetings from interested and prominent members of our Church the Committee responsible for the upkeep of the MAGAZINE decided at their last meeting to provide an enlarged number to inaugurate the year 1927. The Editor has received and gratefully acknowledges the following messages :—

FROM THE MODERATOR.

" Greetings and good wishes to all for 1927. May our Church prosper in the New Year. I try to think sometimes what we need most to bring to us a real ' Forward Movement.' We are conscious of many things we want in our beloved community —more zeal and perseverance, more loyalty, a truer unity, an increase in our numbers, and so on. But what we need more than anything else perhaps is the grace to forget ourselves in our work. We must lose ourselves to find ourselves. Are we not inclined to be too self-centred, too much concerned about our own health. A man who is always feeling his pulse and looking at his tongue is not a very hopeful sort of convalescent. We need to be taken out of a narrow self-interest into a larger life, a bigger world and a wider work. The Christian Movement of which we are a part had the very smallest and humblest of beginnings. The existing tradition and ' Orthodoxy ' were entirely against it. If the primitive handful of disciples had been left to think much about themselves, about their numbers or their prestige : if they had become self-centred, they must have failed. But they were given a great commission and with it a great promise : ' Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations . . . . and lo ! I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world." It was by being taken beyond themselves and beyond the needs of their own little fellowship that they began to build up on earth that divine Society which is with us yet. It was the same with the first Gentile Church and the work of the Apostle Paul, and it has been the same ever since. Whenever the Church has had a forward movement it has been by reaching out beyond its own needs to the needs of others. In a word, missionary effort is the life of the Church. It is not easy to suggest ways and means, and I have not the space to make the attempt here. But ways and means are not the first essential. What is essential is the spirit to make the adventure of faith. We claim to have a gospel to preach and a work to do which the world needs. Let us try to think less of what our own Church needs and more of our call to serve the needs of others ; for surely it is true of Churches as of individuals, ' Whosoever would save his life shall lose it ; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.' "

Yours sincerely,
—EDGAR LOCKETT.

FROM THE RIGHT HON. J. M. ANDREWS, D.L., M.P.

" In response to your request I am pleased to send you a brief message to wish the members of our Church a happy and prosperous New Year.

Industrial conditions during the last few years have been very trying not only in Northern Ireland but also throughout the rest of the United Kingdom and in almost every Continental country. There is, however, good reason for feeling that we can now look forward with confidence to an improvement in our industrial activities and that increased employment, particularly in the shipyards, will be available for our people in the early spring. Through the increased purchasing power of the people generally when fully employed I hope that those engaged in agriculture will also benefit as I know that they have been passing through a very difficult time since the War.

—JOHN M. ANDREWS.
9th December, 1926."

FROM SIR JOHN CAMPBELL, M.A., M.P.

" The aim of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church is to keep before the people the teaching and example of Jesus as their rule of life, and to try to get men to regulate their character and conduct by the commandments laid down by Christ. Were it possible to get all or even a large number of the people to adopt these commandments as their guiding rules, much of the misery and unhappiness now existing would disappear."

FROM THE REV. J. A. KELLY.
NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE.

" THE NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN being the Official Organ of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, has a noble cause to advocate. If any one

doubts this statement let him look into its 'Constitution,' a copy of which I shall send, with pleasure, to anyone who would like to study the same. In it he will find that the basis is emphatically not only Christian, but Brotherly; and as Union and co-operation are in the air at present let me quote here Article VIII which reads:

> 'That the accredited Ministers of other Christian Churches may, at all times, be invited to sit and deliberate with us in the Church Courts, and to join with us in the affectionate intercourse of Ministerial Services and Christian Communion.'

The New Year will be all the brighter if all Denominations of Christians, lay as well as clerical would regard one another as fellow workers in the vast Vineyard of the Divine Master, the King and Head of the Christian Church—a church so surprisingly glorious and inclusive as to put to shame our narrow-mindedness and intolerance. We are called of God to a noble Service; let us walk worthy of the great vocation to which we are all called 'with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' So doing we shall have turned our faces towards the Light and find the shadows of the past falling behind us in the year just born." —J. A. KELLY.

GREETINGS FROM INDIA.

FROM MRS. M'KAY.

May I, on behalf of the Unitarians in India send greetings to your readers at Home. Your MAGAZINE is greatly appreciated there and one of its readers has expressed the hope that each of our Churches in the City will hold a service in the Ulster Hall during 1927, along similar lines to those organised by the Laymen's League and by Mr. Agnew. The reports of these meetings are a source of inspiration and encouragement to those who live abroad, as well as to those at home.

—MARGARET M'KAY.

FROM MR. R. M. LAIRD, BELFAST.—

Heartiest greetings to the readers of the MAGAZINE. I wish them all a happy and prosperous New Year. At the same time in a fraternal spirit I would respectfully urge on them the importance of regular attendance for the worship of God in our meeting places. I would rejoice greatly if our laymen manifested greater interest in the welfare of our Churches. I refer especially, but not exclusively, to the meetings of Synod which, in my opinion, do not receive that amount of lay support which their value to our cause demands. Ministers and laymen might be expected to take a keener interest in all social work. There is a vast amount of beneficial work to be done in the elimination of all vice The prevalence of gambling in all its forms is widespread and constitutes a serious menace to the welfare of the people. It is well known that the drink curse is responsible for waste of time, scamped labour, unproductive expenditure, loss of health and the ruin and degradation of families. As a life long total abstainer I regard the principle of Local Option as the only fair way of settling a crying evil in our midst. Finally, in the interests of the young people of our Churches more thought should be expended on their welfare in the way of providing healthy amusements and rational activities to stimulate their manhood. This is work for all of us to engage in which is likely to bear much fruit.

FROM THE REV. ALFRED TURNER.

Dear Mr. Editor.—Permit me to send you heartiest greetings at the opening of the New Year and all best wishes for the MAGAZINE. As a former Editor of the paper I know something of the magnitude of your task. May your courage in the coming days prove equal to the demands that will be made upon it. In June, the MAGAZINE will complete its twentieth year. May it go on and prosper. There is much for it to do. Everywhere there are signs of a growing interest in the spiritual problems of the time. Note the eager readiness with which our own people respond to call for service, whilst elsewhere there is evidence that many not of our household of faith are sharing those thoughts and views of life so dear to us. Please help us all you can in the direction of the good time coming and may God speed you in your work.

Yours, with best wishes,

A. TURNER.

Notes of the Month.

A Happy New Year.

In the year that is before us we wish all our readers, their families and friends a happy and prosperous New Year.

* *

It is a happiness to feel that the outlook for the coming year is more hopeful and en-

couraging than it has been for a considerable time past. The message of greeting for the New Year to our readers which the Minister of Labour has kindly forwarded for their encouragement will be most acceptable in view of the anxious times they have experienced. Coming as it does from one who is in an unique position to gauge the trend of affairs from the economic standpoint his words cannot fail to put our people in good heart. Indeed the year that has just drawn to a close had during the greater part of its course, its disconcerting features. Losses in trade, unemployment, industrial disputes and consequent poverty all served to cause disquietude of a serious nature. The country is not yet rid of its worse troubles ; yet already there are signs of better times coming, of a period being given to dislocation in industry which has caused widespread trade difficulties and distress among the people. Never before has disagreement in industry lasted for so long a period or brought home to the general public the resulting misery. Now that a New Year has dawned we can look back with something like pride on the general orderliness and law-abiding dispositions of the vast majority of the British public. We may, without undue boasting, congratulate ourselves and the country generally on the fact that the people have borne themselves with conspicuous good humour in a time of unprecedented trial, and have proved once more that they are brimful of the common sense for which the British people have been justly famous. Thus may it be that in face of losses, gloom and disappointment our people will ever put a cheerful courage on and so exemplify in their demeanour that superiority which religion teaches should exist over all events, however terrible or revolutionary.

* * *

We also trust that the dawning year will be full of joy and fruition to the members of our Churches. This can only take place when the men and women who alone compose the Church in their corporate capacity are a worshipping Society. The first requisite is the paramount importance of constancy in worship. Fervent devotion in our Meeting Houses is the source of all true inspiration. All achievements and the sense of well-being flow from the outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Church activities come to glorious fruition when devoted souls are inspired from above and not merely by their surroundings. These are helpful and valuable aids and we are poorer and not as efficient unless our environment is of the best possible kind. It is for this cause that the helpfulness and companionship of numbers make such a vast difference in the services of our Meeting Houses. We would urge on our readers, and indeed on all Church members, not only the sacred duty of regular participation in worship, but also the cultivation of a sense of the warmth and fellowship which religious exercises, along with a goodly company cannot fail to engender. If our Church generally would but recapture the sense of fellowship and fraternal sympathy characteristic of the early Christian community and which the modern churches are sometimes in danger of losing the religious life would become again, what it always should be, the chief centre of social inspiration. It has been truly said that "devotion is natural to a man of noble race, and the organization of devotion is religion. Let no one hope to get away from religion or from religious association. Every step in the progress of modern society has made the need of it more imperious." We would desire nothing better for our people during the coming year than that our places of worship may more and more become the spiritual homes of devoted souls from whom will radiate warmth, sympathy and love over the community in which they are severally placed.

Laymen's League.

United Service in the Ulster Hall.

The continued success of the United Service is a matter of deep interest to all who are concerned for the welfare of our Churches and the triumph of the principles for which they stand. Congratulations are hereby tendered, in the first place, to the Unitarian and Free Christian Laymen's League and in the second place, to the members of our Churches throughout the province, on the magnificent gathering which assembled in the Ulster Hall on Sunday Evening, November 21st. From several points of view the service was a magnificent demonstration. The attendance was all that could be desired, the vast Hall being filled to the extent of its capacity. The Service was inspiring and the people present must have felt glad to be there. The arrangements were carried out without a hitch and this speaks well for the organ-

isers. The platform presented an imposing appearance. The Moderator presided and announced the hymns, the Rev. John Begg offered prayer and the preacher for the evening read the lessons. The Rev. Lawrence Clare's subject was "Freedom, Tradition and the Creeds." A resumé of his sustained effort will be found on another page, but owing to the fact that the preacher spoke only from notes we are unable to give a verbatim account of an admirable discourse designed to define the Unitarian and Non-Subscribing attitude to creeds, dogmatic tests and tradition. The whole address was a complete vindication of the Non-Subscribing attitude to dogma, and a fearless assertion of the necessity of freedom if agreement is to come. Listeners realised once more that "creeds are connected with a scheme of the Universe we do not now hold;" but the preacher was not content with dwelling on negations, and asserted that "we live in a rational Universe." He saw "no sense in the structure of the human soul without God." He stressed the fact that we do not depreciate doctrine, that we do not excommunicate and that freedom aids conviction. We have two centres for our religious experience—freedom and Christian tradition. We want to get at the minds of the Church through the ages and do not attempt to get experience merely from our own individuality; but criticism is not fault-finding: it is a sifting of experience to find the value. He regarded the Lord's Prayer as the finest centre for a new form of Church unity and would be glad to see a new Protestantism centred on the Lord's Prayer. "We freely respect tradition," he said. "We have to be free, reverend and truthful," and quoted Baron Von Hugel with approval on the right use of freedom of thought. We feel that the fifth United Service in the Ulster Hall in many respects was the best of all and are gratified that the project of the Laymen's League initiated several years ago is still meeting a felt want and is, if anything, more popular than ever. We believe that the large number of our readers who were present at the service were in full sympathy with its preacher, and that they thoroughly enjoyed his discriminating and sympathetic attitude towards the traditions of the past, while firmly holding the absolute necessity of freedom of thought in the search for the truth of God.

The Secretary of the Laymen's League writes:

The best thanks of the League are due to the collectors and friends who either collected or sent subscriptions to Revs. L. Clare and H. J. Rossington, for their services; and Mrs. and Mr. R. M. Laird for kind hospitability to visitors, to the members of York Street congregation for their entertainment of our country visitors, and to the musical friends, who helped so effectively to make the service such a success.

Ulster Hall United Service.

The Fifth Annual United Service under the auspices of this Chapter was held in the Ulster Hall on Sunday, November 21st. There was a magnificent turn out of members and friends, the spacious hall being packed in every part. The preacher this year was the Rev. Lawrence Clare, of Birmingham, who took for his subject, "Freedom, Tradition, and the Creeds," his text being Matthew xiii. 52.

Mr. Clare said: "The background of the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed was the moving idea of God pitiful, incarnate, and crucified for us men and for our salvation. Within Catholicism, and within other religions, and independently, too, is the idea of man as yearning for God; obscure at first, this feeling leads to the attempt to reach God, to adopt towards him an attitude that will satisfy such a yearning. These gropings form religious experience. Privileged ones reach extraordinary results, and communicate them to others, and so by mutual helpfulness we advance. The first position has history for a basis, the second position has Experience and Reasoning. The defects of History as a basis are its uncertainty; this may be illustrated by clauses from the Apostles' Creed. "'Born of a Virgin . . . He descended into Hell . . . . Rose again on the third day . . . . Ascended into Heaven." There is fundamental uncertainty here, because these dubious statements form the attesting miracles. In reasoning about Experience, we have the postulate of a Rational Order in the world. When we find any organic being with certain characteristics we infer from the structure that there must be a certain environment. If the "set of the soul" toward goodness and truth be not veridical, it is literally monstrous." So far there are certain propositions characteristic of our position, but the rejection of the credal

basis is cardinal, and this freedom of ours has been paid for in blood and suffering. The objection we take is not to particular creeds only, but to creeds in general—when used as tests and intruded into worship. Creeds are intended to be Vehicles of Experience, though they are far from being the only ones, and they fulfil this function very imperfectly. There is an alleged "unity with the Past" in them, but language, science and philosophy change; and while there is apparent unity in 500 persons reciting the words of a ritual, this unity is nominal, not real—400 reciting from association by contiguity, and 100 only, perhaps, from any sense of real meaning. Then there is the effect on the clergy, we have sophistry there, and decay of authority with a suspicion of insincerity.

Again the implication is that Religion is static. Truth is so, but not man's approximation to it. The creeds are the product of an inferior age—dogmas crystallize at such times; there is an unfavourable atmosphere of intrigue, violence, recrimination and imperial influence. Hence, sincerity demands freedom; agreement and authority demand faith and confidence. But what of the danger of anarchy? This can only arise from a cramped individualism based on a limited personality, limited experience, limited time, limited intelligence, and signifies a deliverance up to eccentricity. But we are not individualists in this sense. Tradition is the river of the waters of Life, and though we repudiate dogma, we do not repudiate doctrine. Our position is comparable to an ellipse determined by the foci of freedom and tradition. This saves us from the dangers suggested, and gives the "Spirit of the Ages" of which Dean Inge speaks. Tradition makes possible racial thinking, corporate thinking, as one man. We accept the results, not slavishly, but with critical respect for tradition; there is no inconsistency here, for one may freely venerate tradition.

This is the way of agreement, rational authority, progress. We have things new and old, the open door is our charge. In all things be reverent, clear-cut, bold and true. As for those not in our churches, if they are satisfied and sincere, well and good. But there are thousands who think as we do and still **subscribe** to the Creed. These are the kind of people who were condemned by the Convocation of Canterbury, against whom the Pope struck and rightly. We want an honest grouping, a new Protestantism based on the Lord's Prayer. This will only come with the spirit of 1662.

Special music was rendered during the service, and solos were sung by Mrs. Moore, A.L.C.M., and Mr. J. A. Laird. Organ music was given by Mr. A. Taylor, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M. Special mention should be made of the hospitality displayed by York Street congregation in attending to the comfort of country friends.

"Shelley the Atheist."

His Defence of True Religion.

Speaking in All Souls' Church, Belfast, on Sunday evening, Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse said, "Mad Shelley" and "Shelley the Atheist" were names given by the Eton schoolboys to one of their fellows whom they despised and treated with contempt. This was one hundred and twenty years ago. To-day the Etonian points with pride to a bust of Shelley, the poet, which graces one of the college halls. "Mad Shelley" passed from Eton to Oxford, and after a few months was expelled for publishing an anonymous pamphlet entitled "The Necessity of Atheism." He felt in disgrace, scorned by practically all connected with the college. To-day no visitor to University College, Oxford, is allowed to leave without being reminded that the great poet once studied within those walls. Shelley died the despised and rejected of men, but there has been a wonderful resurrection.

"Shelley the Atheist" left this world in tragic circumstances before he had been in it thirty years. Shelley, the deeply religious man, will never leave the world. He will be in it as long as truth, beauty, and goodness are in it. The keynote of his life was love, and the keynote of his poetry was beauty. A more harmonious blending of a man's private life with his public work has never been known.

To Shelley the law of love was supreme. Beside it all other laws were insignificant; indeed they were superfluous. "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven," said Jesus on one occasion. Shelley, "the immortal child," as he had been fitly called, was an inhabitant of the Kingdom while he was still on earth.

Most of his troubles and misfortunes were due to his attempts to put into practice the principles of the Heavenly Kingdom.

He was centuries before his time. Even to-day we are only just beginning to understand him. We are not fully appreciating him. Many generations must pass before Shelley, the man, the teacher, and the prophet is fully understood, let alone fully appreciated. Judged by ordinary standards, his life was an ignominious failure. Judged by standards not of this world, his life was a glorious success. He was the embodiment of many high and noble qualities rarely found in combination in human beings.

Shelley's "Defence of Poetry," written over one hundred years ago, still stands as the best prose exposition of poetry ever written. It is much more than the title suggests. It is a defence of everything that is highest and best in human life, and consequently it is a defence of true religion. Curious that one of the best defences of religion in the English language should come from an "Atheist!"

The world is just waking up to the fact that "Mad Shelley" has much to teach it. It is at last prepared to learn from a boy it once called Atheist, a fearless boy who dared to tell it that its contracts, conventions, and laws were useless beside the Divine Law of Love.

It is no answer to say that the world is not yet ready to do away with all other laws, and trust only the Divine Law of Love. This is a criticism of the world, not of Shelley.—"Belfast Telegraph," 1st Nov. 1926.

Implications of a Blessed Hope.

John Ruskin, in "The Crown of Wiid Olive," wrote—"We usually believed in immortality so far as to avoid preparation for death, and in mortality so far as to avoid preparation for anything after death." We cannot conceive of ourselves as dead. Through fear, indifference, or intensive belief in immortality, it is customary to avoid thought of death, and yet death, in the sense of the removal of the body, is a certainty. It is wise to prepare for its coming, and such preparation is at once a stimulus and a moderating influence. Life is short, and the thought of its ending prompts the zealous folk to increased effort on behalf of causes in which they are interested. The same thought restrains improvident expenditure of time, energy and possessions. Failure to prepare for death may result in failure of cherished causes, inconvenience, suffering, want to dependents; and carrying regrets into the future life. No gloom should be associated with the thought of death, but our thoughts should be in the light of the hope of immortality, and with the object that, when the hour of departure comes, it may find us ready for whatever may be God's will, enriched with treasures of which death cannot rob us.

There is also a great failure to prepaie for anything after death, or the preparation is along lines which paralyze life here and now. The thought of citizenship in heaven has obsessed minds to the exclusion of the need for attention to earthly citizenship. Contemplation of mansions in the skies has blinded eyes to bad housing, and thus divorced two necessary features of religious life. This present life is of importance, and regarded in the light of immortality, it becomes supremely important, and the time to concern ourselves with good earthly living is *now*. But while it is essential to pay attention to things of this life, it behoves us to take heed that conduct in no way impairs our future experience, but rather that it becomes effective preparation for what ever lies beyond the grave.

The passing of crude ideas of heaven and hell has not removed the fact that the kind of immortality we are going to get is determined by the kind of life we live on earth. We can carry into the future only what we are, and what we have incorporated into the fibre of our being. In the future life we shall reap the harvest of what has been sown in earthly life, in accordance with the operation of natural laws. Prayer, meditation and spiritual communion are required to fit us for a closer communion with God and the company of Heaven.

Preparation for immortality, however is far more than a personal matter. It affects all social relations, and even the economic system would be influenced by vital beliefs in the eternity of the soul. The employer of labour who sees in a workman, a precious immortal spirit cannot treat him with indifference or contempt.

By reason of its sole immortality, the soul is all important, and every other thing should be so ordered as to promote its welfare. Undoubtedly, outward conditions affect inner life, and there is more likelihood of a soul being fitted for heaven in a garden city than in a slum. Belief, in, or even hope of immortality requires that the believer will not only strive to fit his

own soul for heaven, but that he will endeavour to so order society that others will be helped in their spiritual progress.

O. S.

The Downpatrick Congregation.

It is gratifying to record, as we are able to do in this issue, that the Downpatrick congregation, after a comparatively short interval are already in possession of a new minister. It is creditable to them that they have so speedily come to the decision to call a minister to the pastorate of their Church. The Ordination of the Rev. Victor A. Callow which took place on Thursday, December 2nd was of an impressive character as befits the dignity of an old established congregation. We heartily welcome Mr. Callow, late of Salford, into the ministry of our Non-Subscribing Church. His fellow ministers will rejoice to co-operate with him in every good word and work. We trust that he will be happy in his work and that he and his will find their new surroundings agreeable to them. We congratulate the congregation on their efficient organization which made an early settlement possible. We trust that the union which took place on December 2nd will be a long a fruitful one.

Downpatrick Settlement.

On Thursday the Non-Subscribing Presbytery of Antrim ordained Rev. Victor Allen Callow, late of Salford, to the pastorate of Downpatrick First Presbyterian Church, in succession to Rev. John Begg, The Moderator, Rev. W. H. Tilson, conducted an impressive service, which was largely attended, the congregation including representatives of all Protestant denominations.

Rev. S. P. Whitehouse preached from the text, 'God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.' All worship, he said, must be based on truth. There must be a bridge to cross the gap between religion and science, so that the theologian might worship God and not lose his reverence for truth, while the scientist might worship the truth and not lose his reverence for God.

Rev. A. L. Agnew expounded Presbyterian polity. Following the ordination, Rev. H. J. Rossington gave the charge. The special music with Mr. E. Naylor presiding at the rogan, comprised the solo, 'O, for a closer walk with God,' beautifully sung by Miss G. M'Murray. After the benediction, the new minister was heartily welcomed by the congregation.

The Dinner.

The Presbytery and friends, the whole forming quite a numerous company, were entertained by the congregation at dinner in Magee's hotel. The Moderator occupied the chair. To begin with, 'The King' was loyally toasted.

ALLEGIANCE.

Rev. A. L. Agnew, in proposing 'The Governor and prosperity to Northern Ireland,' said that, however opinions might differ, law-abiding peaceful Christian people united in wishing wisdom and health to whomsoever might be the head of the State. Of late we had been passing through a rather terrible industrial time, and it was reassuring to learn that the clouds were lightening.

CONSTRUING THE BIBLE.

Rev. J. A. Kelly proposed 'The Presbytery of Antrim,' con amore. There had been certain reasons, he said, for the formation of the Presbytery in pursuance of fidelity to convictions. Since then men's minds had broadened. There was no desire to recall old controversies or to stir up prejudices. Everywhere human nature was the same. Met as they were now in a place associated with the name of St. Patrick, who preached no denominational religion, they welcomed Mr. Callow as the thirteenth in a distinguished roll of ministers.

Rev. A. O. Ashworth, replying, asked, 'Where should we have been but for the stand of our forefathers on account of conscience and opinion?' Nevertheless no one to-day desired to accentuate theological differences. In the words of Dr. Gow, Warden of Manchester College, Oxford, the aim was to cultivate the spirit of Christ, and do their duty faithfully as social servants.

Rev. E. Lockett, Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, in proposing 'The New Minister,' paraphrased Charles Lamb's stuttering saying in regard to a certain person spoken of in his hearing, 'I don't known him; but, I damn him, at a venture.' The speaker wanted to bless Mr. Callow—to wish him, as they all did, 'good luck in the name of the Lord.'

Rev. V. A. Callow, who was enthusiastically greeted, suitably expressed his thanks. Long before he ever thought of living here, he said, he had read this view put forward

by a gentleman of the district, 'The best people in the world are Britons: the best people in the Empire are Irishmen; the best people in Ireland are Ulstermen.' Certainly Downpatrick knew the art of kindly welcome. The only welcome he now awaited was one into the homes and lives of the people. Too much might be expected of him. Let it not be supposed that he was a little lower than an angel, or possessed magical power with which to dispel every difficulty that might arise. If anything was to be accomplished there must be co-operation. He felt he should have that. What ever might befall, they would doubtless share joy and sorrow together, and he hoped that they would gain in spiritual strength, fitting themselves to be more worthy of the kingdom of heaven.

Rev. J. G. Davies, in giving 'Ministers of Other Churches,' advocated Christian unity in confronting problems common to them all.

Rev. F. T. Parker, in responding, said that the slogan of the Methodist Church was, 'The friends of all, and the enemies of none.'

Rev. R. M'Elney also reciprocated the brotherly feeling of the occasion.

After the customary votes of thanks the proceedings were ended with the National Anthem.

Correspondence.

Letters and manuscripts for the Editor should be sent to the Manse, Killinchy, Co. Down, not later than the 16th of each month. The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. No letter can be inserted without the name and address of the sender.

Will correspondents kindly note that letters sent direct to the printer cannot be published. The Editor must see all correspondence intended for this column.

To the Editor of the N.S.P.

STUDENTS' AND MINISTERS' FUND.

SIR,—The original of above Fund was the Professorships' Fund, i.e., a Fund for the remuneration of the Professors who were appointed to give free education to Students for the Ministry: as there are now no Professors the income from the Fund is rightly regarded as in the **first** place one to help Students to get the necessary Education for their calling, and if any revenue remains it is to be divided among ministers. In the interests of our Church it is to be hoped that in future the Students will be so numerous as to use up all the revenue.

—J. A. KELLY.

STUDENTS' AND MINISTERS' AUXILIARY FUND.

The Editor, N. S. P. MAGAZINE.

SIR,—I think "Presbyter" is mistaken in his view of the purpose of the above Fund as stated in your last number. The facts are these. The Government formerly paid £300 per annum towards the maintenance of theological professors for Non-Subscribing Presbyterians in Ireland. The object of the contribution was evidently to promote the training of students, and not to augment ministerial salaries. The Irish Church Act of 1869 abolished the grant, but gave a compensation of £4,200, which was put for investment into the hands of trustees appointed jointly by the two professors and the Association of N. S. Presbyterians in Ireland. By the Indenture the professors were to receive £150 each for life and subject thereto the income was to be used for the education of students. After payments to the professors ceased in 1881 the income was not all spent in assisting students, and the funds gradually increased. In 1917 the Association decided to apply to the Court of Chancery to have the trusts modified so as to make it possible for money not required at any time for students to be utilized in grants to the ministers most in need of financial aid. The administration of the Fund is at present governed by the Scheme ordered to operate by the Judge in 1918.

By this Scheme the Income of the Fund may be applied in providing School Exhibitions and College Bursaries for students. Income not required for this purpose may be given at the discretion of the trustees to augment the stipends of ministers needing help. Unexpended income may be invested. While the intention of the Scheme is that, after all the necessary or advisable assistance to students has been afforded, the balance of income shall be available for ministers in need of aid, it is clear that ministers are secondary to the students, and that the latter are the primary concern of this particular Fund. The question of adequate payment of the ministry has its own importance, but other Funds and the churches have the special responsibility in that matter.

I may add that students are a vital necessity. A Church which does not produce men to maintain its ministry can have no future. Taking the period of ministerial service at 40 years, our Church in Ireland should train 30 students in 40 years, or 3 should start every 4 years. While all might not settle in Irish churches, one minister could be given in exchange for each one received from across the Channel. With regard to the case mentioned by "Presbyter," the greatest care needs to be exercised by the Presbyteries in approving students for assistance, but risk cannot be wholly avoided, as otherwise no students at all could be helped. The trustees of the Fund have since endeavoured to reduce the risk by requiring an undertaking from each student and his friends to return a portion of the grants received if, after being trained, he fails to carry out his expressed intention to enter the Non-Subscribing ministry.

Yours, etc.,
TRUSTEE

The Rev. A. L. Agnew, in a long letter, received too late for insertion in extenso, points out that the "Students' and Ministers' Fund" was a Professors' Fund and not a Professional Fund. Replying to "Presbyter" and Mr. M'Ninch he gives adequate evidence of his efforts to alter the rules. He cites the case of a student who, for various reasons, has not received yet a bursary, and pleads for more sympathetic treatment of students even though the existing rules may not be altered. He again emphasises the necessity for new rules and constructive criticism of the old ones.

[As evidenced by the above letters from the Rev. J. A. Kelly, and "Trustee,' Students are wanted and if approved will receive support. This correspondence must now close—EDITOR.].

A New Year's Sermon.

BY REV. ALBERT WHITFORD,
Moneyrea.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."—Exodus 14 : 15.

The children of Israel are facing a new world : Egypt, with its brick-making and its task-masters has been left behind. No more will their backs receive the lash of their persecutor : for them, slavery has come to an end and they are now marching as free men to a new country. Our text finds them facing a seemingly insurmountable barrier, namely, the Red Sea. How are they to cross ? This was a problem for Moses to solve and he forms a splendid study in the way he faces his task. Like a sensible man Moses went to his knees—which is really the only thing a man can do when he is beaten. His experiences resemble that of another great leader who said he had often been driven to his knees by the over-whelming conviction that he had nowhere else to go. The grand old Book tells us that in answer to his prayer Moses received this message from God : "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."

Let me take the latter part of that message and pass it on to you at the beginning of a New Year : "Go forward." This will form a good motto for 1927. As you read these words you may perhaps feel that you are already doing your best—the text, however, suggests something more : it seems to say, "exceed your best, and go in for record breaking." As one writer puts it : **"Our hats off to the past, and our coats off to the future."** January first, said to be everybody's birthday, is a time for turning over a new leaf—a leaf clean and free from creases. What can we do better than face the steady and continuous demands of duty with a determination to **go forward.** Among the many things with which life is compared the simile I like best is that of a pilgrimage along a road. We are all travellers : we begin as babes, then walk as children ; youth finds us stepping forward with eagerness and enthusiasm—later we are called upon to face the duties of manhood and womanhood—then we begin to step westward when we are inclined to travel a little more slowly ; and finally we stumble on with the crutch of old age—still going on to a to-morrow. Yes, life is a journey : it has many beautiful features too. The most beautiful however is this : to those whose minds are susceptible to spiritual influences the journey is a personally conducted tour. This is a stimulating thought and one which lies at the basis of successful living. Many beautiful lives are simply records of men and women who go forward **with faith in God.**

Some years ago, in a little church across the Irish Sea a few of us used to gather together in a happy family circle and one of the songs we loved to sing was : "God holds the key of all unknown, and I am glad." What a gladness steals into the soul when

this becomes true to us! "God with us" is a rich faith: it sends a man to his daily toil with a song in his heart; it prepares a table in the presence of our enemies, and its light shines even in the Valley of the Shadow.

One sometimes hears time spoken of as "the enemy"—why it should be thus referred to I do not know. Perhaps this is one of the influences of poems like that of Longfellow on "The Old Clock on the Stairs." I don't like Longfellow's picture of time: it seems to strike the note of sadness. Time is not an enemy; if rightly used it is a friend. It doesn't come to make croakers but Christians. I like to think of the message of time, like the message of Jesus, as one of good cheer—and there is no real reason why it should not be such a message. A true vision will enable us to see even through "the mud and scum" of things, signs of what Tennyson calls "One increasing purpose." I read recently of a man who had a grudge against providence because he was born fifty years too soon—How many feel the same! Nor is it a mean grudge—one loves to meet the man who is so closely in touch with life as to long to know more of the purposes of God. Time, however, does not go back for us. I only know of one man for whom it is said that time went back—Hezekiah, King of Judah—and he made a mess of it. Let us use the present wisely: that is our task.

In conclusion may I add this counsel: let each of us so live that our moments run parallel with the Divine purposes of God. That is a true forward movement. It is a grand thing to have a sense of divine missions: that conviction was certainly the secret of the Master's successful life.—Jesus was always about his Father's business. Follow his story and you will find abundant traces of this dominating passion. He never came to any secular patch of ground where he could not build an altar: to Him, there was always a temple of worship at hand, and this resulted in a Carpenter becoming the greatest Man in the world. So may it be with those who are trying to continue his unfinished Ministry. No matter how intricate may be the tracks of life through which we travel on our journey, if we bring to them the passion of true religion they will lead us as they led Jesus, to God. Charles Kingsley, caught in a London fog, said to his friend Thomas Hughes, "Isn't this like life: a deep yellow fog all around with a dim light here and there shining through—you grope your way from one lamp to another and you go up wrong streets and back again—but you get home at last: there is always light enough to get home by." Yes, there is always light enough to get home by, so we needn't be afraid to "Go Forward."

Impressions of Downpatrick Ordination

If the spirits of the pious dead are permitted to co-operate in the work of the living, there must have been a cloud of unseen witnesses to the Ordination of the Rev. Victor Allen Callow on Thursday, December 2nd in Downpatrick. Consider the setting of the solemn ceremony. The oldest town in County Down, a place rich in historic tradition and memorable associations. Before Belfast was a village Downpatrick was an important community. The very soil is sacred because it was trodden by the feet of St. Patrick and is hallowed by his ashes. There the Patron Saint of Ireland preached the gospel to our rude forefathers, founded his Churches, and ended his days. There, several centuries later, the Norman adventurer, Sir John de Courcy, came, not to win his way to the hearts of the people by gentle persuasion, as St. Patrick did, but to force his will on them at the point of the sword. Doubtless he had heard of the good land of Lecale of the navigable river, and peace-loving inhabitants; and in the spirit of the proud Caesar he "came, he saw, and he conquered." The well-preserved ruins of many old castles bear witness to his determination to keep what he had won, and the taste and skill in Architecture of the Norman settlers are still seen in the beautiful stone-work at Inch Abbey and other places in the district.

In such surroundings an Ordination was bound to be peculiarly impressive. The man who undertakes the work of the ministry in Downpatrick stands in direct succession to St. Patrick, and shares the responsibility of advancing the cause planted there so long ago. To this difficult task Mr. Callow was introduced by the Presbytery of Antrim. That the proceedings were conducted by that ancient ecclesiastical body had surely a peculiar fitness. For two hundred years the Presbytery of Antrim has never turned aside from its allegiance to the principle of freedom from creed and dogma. Within its ranks have been included many men of outstanding ability; at a meeting in Downpatrick the name of

Nelson could not well be forgotten, for the traditions of this honourable Presbytery were worthily maintained by father and son in that place. Where they stood the Rev. V. A. Callow now stands, and shares the privilege of the Ministry, and of membership of the Presbytery committed to him by the laying on of the hands of the brethren. It is natural that Mr. Callow should be hopeful and enthusiastic on taking up his task, for he is young in years. And yet he is not altogether inexperienced. For some eighteen months he has laboured in the Bible Christian congregation of Salford. In making the statement usual on these occasions, he showed himself possessed of a very fair voice, a pleasing delivery, and a modest and unassuming bearing. The Rev. W. H. T. Tilson, as Moderator of Presbytery, presided, and put the questions to the candidate. Mr. Whitehouse of All Soul's preached the sermon. He expressed the view that the church was tolerated, but not respected. That may hold good of other countries, but in the North of Ireland the church is greatly respected, and exercises a deep influence on the life of the community. The Rev. A. L. Agnew explained our Presbyterian system of church government, and in an extemporaneous address made a rather dry subject so clear and intelligible that even a child could not fail to understand its good points. The charge to minister and people was in the capable hands of Rev. H. J. Rossington. Altogether the service was impressive, and the Presbytery did not forget on this occasion, as on last, to invite all other ministers present to take part in the solemn act of laying on of hands.

The visiting ministers and a large party were entertained to a sumptuous repast, splendidly served, in Denver's Hotel. Many toasts were proposed and the speeches were eloquent and amusing. Rev. J. A. Kelly, speaking in his native district, showed all his old fire and forcibleness, though he is now the doyen of the active ministry of the North of Ireland Non-Subscribers. It must, however, have struck his hearers that his lengthened experience had been of an unfortunate kind, a vein of pessimism strangely out of keeping with his bright disposition characterized his remarks. In language lurid, if unparliamentary, he told a very good story, the moral of which was that people in general were d— rascals. This gave the Rev. R. M'Elney a minister of the General Assembly a fine opportunity, of which he made full use, to the great delight of the hearers, twitting Mr. Kelly with adhering to the Calvanistic doctrine of the Total Depravity of human nature. Rev. Mr. Parker of the Methodist Church, in a very brotherly speech voiced his good wishes towards the new minister and his congregation.

At the close the National Anthem was sung, as indeed it was earlier in the proceedings, and so proof was given to all who might be interested that loyalty is an outstanding characteristic of the Unitarians of Downpatrick. God bless them!

—"VISITOR."

A Church Calendar.

The following extract from the Autumn Calendar, 1926, of the Bournemouth Unitarian Church has been kindly forwarded to us by Mr. H. B. Hunter, now of Bournemouth, who believes it will be of interest to our readers:—

"A word as to the constitution of our Church. It is founded on the undogmatic principle, as a Free Church. It is pledged only to God and the humble service that His worshippers may render. The name 'Unitarian' attached to the Church indicates the character of the teaching now prevalent in it. The minister is a Unitarian, and earnestly affirms that the Gospel of Christ is most truly interpreted in the light of his absolute humanity—a revealing of our true life with God—and that to be a Christian is simply to follow Christ. The appeal to all who come into the Church is, not that they shall accept on authority any particular doctrines concerning God and Christ, but that they shall join with their brethren in the earnest spirit of worship, and with an understanding heart and steadfast purpose in well-doing, arrive at their own convictions of divine truth."

* * * *

Small piles of rice, sago and coffee-berries that have been kept for two hundred years are among the curiosities of the scientific collection which has been brought together at the Old Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, for the period of the British Association's visit. These dried grains belong to a collection made in 1720, for the instruction of his students, by John Poynter, an Oxford don. This, the oldest teaching collection in the world, includes also the earliest berries brought from Barbadoes.

Temperance Notes.

An Apology and Regret.

A valued correspondent sent me a copy of "Truth," specially marked. Carelessly, I read the marked passage as an ordinary contribution to the columns of "Truth;" but as my correspondent has just pointed out this was really from the Advertisement Columns! I therefore sincerely apologise both to my friend and to "Truth."

The article referred to is from "Peeps in my Diary," by W. E. Harcomb, Valuer, which is a chit-chat on news in general and valuation in items in particular. I am naturally disappointed to find the comment which I quoted was not actually from "Truth" for it ruined a little attempt of mine at humour which might have bordered on the brilliant side but has now fallen flat!

The Truth.

One must be careful when not possessing "inside information," but it would appear that the exclusion of liquor advertisements from "Punch" was due primarily to the increased rate charged for advertisements in general. At the same time just look at the advertisement columns of that Journal. In a recent issue I counted no less than forty-two pages of advertising matter from firms and businesses of all descriptions, dealing with scores of different articles and commercial products. In this connection I fail to understand the report of a speech by a managing Director of the great distillery firm of J. Buchanan & Co., (quite a while ago) where he suggested that the decision might have been inspired by the personal view of the proprietors of "Punch."

We must leave it there.

"Party Politics and Local Option."

An interesting position has arisen in our Six Counties over a statement of the Premier. All of our readers must be aware of it, for many columns are filled in all the Dailies every day. For myself I simply watch and wonder at present; for I frankly admit I know so much concerning Party Politics that it is becoming increasingly difficult to understand it. And also it is undoubtedly true that we can attribute too much to the moral power of legislation. Reform comes from within surely. To put it bluntly, a man made sober because he can't get drink, is not to be compared to one who keeps sober for sobriety's sake.

At the same time we must not seem to belittle the undoubted benefits which have become patent since the passing of the Intoxicating Liquor Act, 1923; benefits which are appreciated by all creeds, party and classes, and even by some members of the Trade. We have always in these columns advocated Local Option, if only that it gives the people themselves a say in the matter of the distribution of licences. But in the field of Party Politics is ground that angels would fear to tread.

Greeting.

We most heartily convey our good wishes to all Temperance workers, for Prosperity in the Cause during the New Year.

—P. G.

Subscriptions to Extinction of Debt on Magazine.

Previously acknowledged ..	£30	2	0
All Souls Church, per Mr. Johnston:			
Miss Dobbin ..	1	0	0
Mr. John Montgomery ..	1	0	0
Mr. David Henderson ..	0	10	0
Mr. Adam Millin ..	0	10	0
Miss Montgomery ..	0	5	0
Miss A. Montgomery ..	0	5	0
Miss Carmichael ..	0	5	0
Mr. J. Henderson ..	0	5	0
Mr. R. M. Laird, Belfast ..	1	0	0
Comber Branch Women's League per Mrs. Hind ..	1	0	0

Further donations will be gratefully received.

The modest little house in the Via Spagna Rome which commemorates two great English poets who died in Italy, is labelled the Keats-Shelley Memorial House.

The other day a visitor from the States dashed in and asked loudly, "Who was this fellow Keats-Shelley, anyway, and when did he live?"

A compatriot turned to him and said in a fierce whisper, "Don't show your lack of culture. Every schoolboy knows he lived in the reign of good Queen Bess."

Advent.

The ancient churches have in the course of their history built up a calendar, which is designed among other things to recall all the events in the life of our Lord, as well as to provide for the systematic teaching of their doctrines. The first half of the year from Advent to Whitsunday is devoted to the former purpose, the second half to the latter.

In the " Ten Services " and in " Common Prayer for Christian Worship " edited by Dr. Martineau, a supplement is devoted to the Christian Year, which begins with the first Sunday in Advent. In the Holy Eastern Church (the Church of Greece and Russia) an older calendar is used which puts all the commemorations twelve days later. One group of festivals is determined by Christmas, Another group by Easter, and that is decided by the Paschal full moon, as was the Jewish Passover.

There are many advantages in following the Christian Year, as it provides every Sunday with a subject, and makes religious teaching for the year more systematic. In England, especially in the South, this method is a great help as these people make more of the religious festivals than is done where Presbyterianism predominates. It certainly has the effect of promoting a feeling of Christian unity with the whole Church, East and West, and raising the thoughts of people beyond the narrow ruts of denominationalism.

Four Sundays, before Christmas, in preparation for that joyous festival, begins Advent, the Churches' New Year, when our attention is drawn to the beginning of the Church, to the conditions among which it appeared. It is very clear that the people of Palestine were very much like the Scotch of John Knox's day, and later in the time of the Covenanters, impatient of anything approaching argument, very dour, and inclined to be fiercely fanatical. Very sincere and earnest undoubtedly, that was their good quality which gave promise for better things in the future. John Knox saw to it that in every parish was a schoolhouse and a school-master, but Scotch schools had an unenviable notoriety for " the tawse," and woe to the luckless youth who slipped into saying " Sanctification was an **act** of God's free grace," instead of a " work." Love and brotherliness as being of supreme importance as the teaching of the Divine Master were not dreamt of. How little was such teaching appreciated when first proclaimed, how little has the Church ever realised it. Yet, if this Advent were once again a real coming of the Christ, what else would He proclaim, but the Kingdom of happiness. Would He not tell the world that its evils come from lack of love and brotherliness, and that if man adopted these, then would be ushered in the Kingdom of Happiness. Simple enough as all great far reaching truths are. He came not as a substitute, but as a Saviour, feeling the world's sin and sufferings as His own. In relieving these we minister to Him," and inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these ye have done it unto Me."

—Ullin.

Dean Inge's Religion.

The outstanding personality of the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, Dean of St. Paul's, frequently attracts public notice. Distinguished even among his peers for intellectual pre-eminence, clarity of thought, philosophic acumen, the incisive vigour of his diction and his arresting comments on modern tendencies, he is now and again adversely criticised in the Public Press as one who looks askance at some phases of modern developments, and as one who exaggerates modern degenerate tendencies. He has been called " the gloomy Dean," a reactionary, a pessimist and what not. His trenchant criticisms are used as texts for newspaper articles and not seldom distorted out of their connection and so cause him to appear as other than he actually is. This is the fate of all outstanding leaders of thought. Smaller men regard him as *good copy*, and as such he is a godsend to them. It is thus that original thinkers are misunderstood and misrepresented. Cavillers look for their cue to the majority of voices, rather than to the truth of God. When wagging tongues are busy enough and facile pens scribble industriously, some leader of thought, having something considerable to communicate, is placed on the rack—for a time. Emerson's dictum, " to be great is

to be misunderstood" fits in with the Dean's intellectual eminence and fearless independence. He goes on his way rejoicing, taking no heed, never replying and saying the things his mind and heart dictate.

Whether the Dean is right or mistaken in any or all his conclusions, his isolation from the herd of superficial optimists stamps him as a man of mark whose penetrating insight probes the malady which infests modern civilization. Are there not many folk who listen to catch the majority of voices before they form opinions of their own; who, when they succeed to diagnose the trend of prevalent views, set themselves up as leaders of thought? The catchword "saftey first" while wholly necessary for highway traffic, is hardly heroic when applied to searchers after the truth. Modern life has many folk who adopt the formula "safety first" and too many attitudes gain adherents because they are politic and eminently respectable, or else are the fashion of the day, or, may be, because they are convenient screens to hide poverty of thought and aspiration.

It is hardly a matter for wonder that Dean Inge in an essay contributed to "Science, Religion and Reality," a volume of Essays edited by Joseph Needham (Sheldon Press, 12/6), gives utterance to the characteristic phrase:—

"It is even possible to speculate (though I should not go so far myself) whether the religion of Christ might not be a greater power in the world if its professional custodians were removed."

Professionals, no doubt, have some vested interest in what is termed "Orthodox" faith. When the old Orthodoxy fails to satisfy the growing intelligence of the times, custodians of "the faith" forthwith hanker after a New Orthodoxy as a safeguard to the pursuit of "irrational fancies" and as a set off against the "Appeal to Catholic Antiquity and the acceptance of pre-religious cults slightly veneered." These give an intelligible reason why a "New Orthodoxy" should gradually be shaped; but the principles of Non-Subscription preclude any attempts on our part from listening to the siren voice of even such a courageous champion of modernism as Dr Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham.

One critic asks "what exactly is the religion of the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, Dean of St. Paul's?" He tells us that the Dean in his essay sets out to make some sort of an answer to the question, but thinks the ordinary reader, after reading the essay, will probably find himself further than ever from understanding the Dean's position; but is obliged to recognise his candour in rejecting the idea of a "geographical" heaven or hell, and his dismissal of the Biblical stories of the Ascension and miracles generally. The same writer continues: "In place of the traditional Christian faith as expounded by the Established Church, of which he is a member, the Dean seems to put what he vaguely describes as an 'atmosphere'" and quotes the Dean's words thus—

"In middle life . . . . our creed is simplified and intensified. God becomes less for us an object than an atmosphere." This no doubt, as the critic says, sounds vague and uncertain; but when one considers that the Dean is probably referring to the inner history of his personal religious life, he surely may be pardoned for not attempting to bare the holy of holies of his private convictions in inadequate human language. The craving for ultimate certainties is on a par with the old idea of Orthodoxy as necessary for conviction, or the later idea that a new orthodoxy will gradually shape itself. One believes the Dean's way is the better way. An atmosphere is surely no bad thing; and the atmosphere which surrounds the Dean of St. Paul's is unquestionably wholesome, radiating spiritual power and philosophic culture whenever he writes or speaks. One would fain believe that *the God atmosphere* surrounding the Dean of St. Paul's, and breathing out of him, is more important to the world to-day, and more especially to Non-Subscribers than any amount of fervent crying of Lord, Lord! which neither does nor says the things which *the God accents* are declaring. Human language is notoriously deficient in power to describe the sacred aspirations of the souls of men.

It is satisfactory to find that the Dean of St. Paul's in spite of detractors is a deeply religious man, living in the atmosphere of religion continually. He is out to reconcile science and faith when he says in the essay above mentioned: "I think we may say of natural science what Bacon said of philosophy, that, while a little knowledge often estranges men from religion, a deeper

knowledge brings them back to it ; though we ought to add that the religion to which deeper knowledge brings us is not the same as that from which superficial knowledge estranges us." There is food for thought in these words for all who believe in the principles of Non-Subscription ; for a deeper knowledge and reasonable religion, in spite of antiquated forms of faith, will in the end win the day. We are at one with the Dean in his insistence on the fact " that there are already large numbers of Christians who find it possible to follow Christ while accepting the conclusions of science and the scientific attitude of mind." There is encouragement for us in this statement, for it is one that has been long held by the leaders of our community.

Religion and Anthropology.

In view of the New Faculty of Theology soon to be established in connection with Queen's University, Belfast, it may be allowed to quote from a little book on " Anthropology " in the Home University Library by R. R. Marett. He has in his chapter on Religion some pertinent and true things to say which are well worth noting. He begins by referring to an objection once made by a French Senator, " ' How can there be a history of religion ? For either one believes in a religion ; or one does not believe in it, and then everything in it appears to be absurd. This was said thirty years ago, when it was a question of founding the now famous chair of the General History of Religions at the College de France. At that time, such chairs were almost unheard of. Now-a-days, the more important universities of the world, to reckon them alone, can show at least thirty."

" What is the significance of this change ? It means that the parochial view of religion is out of date. The religious man has to be a man of the world, a man of the wider world, an anthropologist. He is to recognise that there is a soul of truth in other religions besides his own."

Mr. Marett tells us that he does not " believe that we can help thinking to ourselves all the time, when we are tracing out the history of world-religion, either that there is ' nothing in it ' at all, or that there is ' something in it,' whatever form it assume, and whether it holds itself to be revealed (as it almost always does) or not. On the latter estimate of religion, however, it is still quite possible to judge that one form of religion is infinitely higher and better than another. Religion, regarded historically, is in evolution. The best form of religion that we can attain to is inevitably the best for us ; but, as a worse form preceded it, so a better form, we must allow and even desire, may follow."

Mr. Marett from the point of view of the psychology of religion reminds us of a fact which is not always remembered by votaries of religion. He insisted that " the function of religion is to restore men's confidence when it is shaken by crisis. Men do not seek crisis ; they would always run away from it, if they could. Crisis seeks them ; and whereas the feebler folk are ready to succumb the bolder spirits face it. **Religion is the facing of the unknown. It is the courage in it that brings comfort.** The courage involved in all live religions normally co-exists with a certain modesty or humility."

He pursues his subject by considering religion sociologically. " A religion is the effort to face crisis, so far as that effort is organised by society in some particular manner. A religion is congregational—that is to say, serves the end of a number of persons simultaneously. It is traditional—that is to say, has served the ends of successive generations of persons. Therefore inevitably it has standardized a method. It involves a routine, a ritual. Also it involves some sort of conventional doctrine, which is as it were, the inner side of the ritual—its lining."

" The religion of the savage is part of his custom ; nay, rather, it is his whole custom, as far as it appears sacred—so far as it coerces him by way of his imagination. Between him and the unknown stands nothing but his custom. It is his all-in-all, his standby, his faith and his hope. Being thus the sole source of his confidence, his custom, so far as his imagination plays about it, becomes his 'luck.' We may say that any and every custom, in so far as it is regarded as lucky, is a religious rite."

" Hence the Conservatism inherent in religion. ' Nothing,' says Robertson Smith, appeals so strongly as religion to the conservative instinct.' ' The history of religion ' once exclaimed Dr. Frazer, ' is a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason, to find a sound theory for absurd practice.' At first sight one is apt to see nothing but the absurdities in savage custom and religion. After all, these are

what strike us most, being the curiosity hunters that we all are. But savage custom and religion must be taken as a whole, the bad side with the good."

But a healthy society is bound, in a wholesome way, to have a wholesome custom. Though it may go about the business in a queer and round-about fashion, it must hit off the general requirements of the situation."

And so Mr. Marett gives it as his firm conviction and makes it his working assumption, " that, with all its apparent drawbacks, the religion of a human society, if the latter be a going concern, is always something to be respected."

In considering the relation of religion to custom our author is " met by the apparent difficulty that, whereas custom implies ' Do,' the prevailing note of primitive religion would seem rather to consist in ' Do Not.' " But," he says, " there is really no antagonism between them on this account. As the old Greek proverb has it. ' There is only one way of going right, but there are infinite ways of going wrong.' Hence, a nice observance of custom of itself involves endless taboos. Since a given line of conduct is lucky, then this or that alternative course of behaviour is unlucky. There is just this difference between positive customs or rites, which cause something to be done, and negative customs or rites, which cause something to be left undone, that the latter appeal more exclusively to the imagination for their sanction, and are therefore more conspicuously, and directly a part of religion. ' Why should I do this ?' is answered well-nigh sufficiently by saying, ' Because it is the custom, because it is right.' It seems hardly necessary to add, ' Because it will bring luck.' But ' why whould I not do something else instead ? ' meets in the primitive society, with the invariable answer, ' Because, if you do, something awful will happen to us all.' What precise shape the ill-luck will take need not be specified. The suggestion rather gains than loses by the indefiniteness of its appeal to the imagination."

We cannot follow our author into the details of his chapter on religion considered from the anthropological point of view ; but enough has been extracted to show that this part of Mr. Marett's book is well worth reading carefully. It may give us fuller sympathy with the painful efforts of our race to seek after and to find that which is real and true. It is by long and devious ways mankind has arrived at his present measure of attainment. Non-Subscribing Church-goers may take comfort in the thought that they are in line with men who have ever sought the real things of life, are encouraged to believe that finality is yet far to seek and that the end is not yet.

We may fittingly draw these random extracts to a close by giving the author's conclusion with respect to the function of religion. In his view, the place of religion in human life " is to restore confidence, when man is mazed, and out of his depth, fearful of the mysteries that obtrude on his life, yet compelled, if not exactly wishful, to face them and wrest from them whatever help is in them. This function religion fulfils by what may be described in one word as ' suggestion.' Religion stands by when there is something to be done, and suggests that it can be done well and successfully. Nay, that it is being so done. And, when the religion is of the effective sort, the believers respond to the suggestion, and put the thing through. As the Latin poet says, ' they can because they think they can.' What from the Anthropological point of view, is the effective sort of religion, the sort that survives because on the whole, those whom it helps survive ? It is dangerous to make sweeping generalizations, but there is at any rate a good deal to be said for classing the world's religion either as mechanical and ineffective or as spiritual and effective. The mechanical kind offers its consolations in the shape of a set of implements. The ' virtue ' resides in certain rites and formularies. These are especially liable to harden into mere mechanism when they are of the negative and precautionary type. The spiritual kind of religion, on the other hand, which is specially associated with the positive and active functions of life, tends to read will and personality into the wonder-working powers that it summons to man's aid. The will and personality in the worshippers are in need not so much of implements as of more will and personality. They get this from a spiritual kind of religion : which in one way or another always suggests a society, a communion, as at once the means and the end of vital betterment."

This spiritual kind of religion it is the business and privilege of non-subscribing Christians to propagate and expedite with all the power of will they can muster and to develop among themselves such personalities as will make their mark on the social life around them.

Their Religion.

Why Many Men Reject Christianity.

The Rev. J. Ernest Rattenbury, preaching at Trinity Wesleyan Church, Southport, on Sunday, September 26th, said the newspaper Questionnaire on religion revealed the fact that a great many English people rejected the Christian religion.

The causes were not easy to analyse. Moral reasons accounted for many rejections of Christianity. People who occupied themselves almost exclusively with the things of the senses tended to lose their spiritual values, and the high demands of the Christian religion many people will not meet.

Perhaps it would not be wrong to say that the humanistic movement of the past 500 years, and particularly of the past century, was the general cause of unbelief. Humanism and morality emphasised man's independence ; religion emphasised his dependence. The war ought to have shown that mere material progress was useless.

Perhaps most rejections of Christianity were due to the fact that it really was not Christianity that men rejected, but the body of doctrine which they wrongly identified with it. " Christianity is primarily experiment, and only secondarily doctrine," said Mr. Rattenbury.

The old lady had written to the Borough Council complaining of the empurpled language used by two of their workmen engaged on road repairs.

She received a letter from the Town Surveyor in these terms : " I have the honour to inform you that inquiries made into the incident referred to show that it originated in Mr. C. Bates accidentally dropping a shovel on Mr. W. Jones. Mr. Jones remarked, ' Charles, I wish you would kindly take greater precautions against carelessness.' Mr. Bates replied, ' Certainly, William.' No other words, I am assured, passed."

* *

Teacher : " From which point of the compass is the wind blowing ? "

" From the north, sir."

" Then on which side of the school would you expect to find the best shelter ? "

" Inside, sir ! "

Obituary.

Miss Davidson, Belfast.

The death of Miss Maria Davidson, which occurred unexpectedly on Monday morning, December 13th, aroused feelings of deep regret among her relatives and a large circle of friends. She had been suffering from heart-trouble for upwards of two years, but she bore her affliction with fortitude and equable spirit, chafing at her confinement to the house only, because she was deprived of the joys of Marybrook's beautiful garden, and the exercises of public worship.

The last of a highly respected, large and influential family she never failed to maintain the dignity and grace of her race, nor the steadfastness to liberal religious principles which characterised her father, who as a young man joined the movement led by Dr. Montgomery in the opening years of the last century. Her connection with Mountpottinger dates from its earliest days, when she and her sister became teachers in the Sunday School founded by Mr. Robert M'Calmont, in Rithcie's Felt Works, in 1862. From that time to her death her interest knew no wavering, and in season and out of season she could be depended on to do her part. The feelings of affection she awakened for herself in the hearts of her Sunday school girls, extending over a period of forty or more years were deep and lasting, as was testified again and again at the Re-union of Old Scholars and Friends at the Jubilee Celebrations in January, 1925. But her activities were not confined to the Sunday School. The Church also found in her a loyal and helpful member, and her cultured and reflective mind, and spirit of devotion ministered in various ways to the life of public worship.

Many of the charities in and around Belfast found her an interested supporter, as did our own Domestic Mission, likewise the Orphan Society of which she continued to the last, the Local Treasurer.

In our denominational life at home and abroad she was well versed, and she often recounted the joys she experienced when attending the International Congress held in Geneva in 1905.

Her shrewd, and kindly counsel will be sorely missed not only in the family circle of many nieces and nephews, but also in the church to which she was so devoted from its foundation.

The interment which was private took place on the following Wednesday, in the Family Burying Ground, at Dundonald Parish Church, and the service at Marybrook and the graveside were conducted by the Rev. M. Watkins. On Sunday morning December 19th, a Memorial Service was held at Mountpottinger Unitarian Church.

BALLYCARRY.

At the Old Presbyterian Church, the Minister, the Rev. W. G. Marsden, before entering upon the Sermon for the day, spoke of the passing away of an old friend, Mr. James Magowan, a devoted member of that Congregation, and an Elder and Treasurer for many years past.

It was on Wednesday, November 24th that the cortege left his residence, Alexandra Park Avenue, Belfast (where he had only lately removed) and which was attended by many friends from Ballycarry, Islandmagee and Whitehead. The mortal remains were interred at Ballyprior, which is at the Larne end of Islandmagee, the family burial ground. The Service at the house and at the graveside was conducted by his Minister the Rev. W. G. Marsden.

The loss of his kindly cheery presence will be much felt by the friends at Ballycarry, for he was very rarely absent from his church, walking all the way from his residence on the top of Black Head, Sunday by Sunday he went, during the most inclement weather.

* * * *

Doctor X is as famous for his illegible penmanship as for his medical skill.

One day he dropped a note to a friend asking him to spend the evening with him, and suggesting cards and a little music. The friend did not turn up.

When next he met him, Dr. X said, rather reproachfully, "Didn't you get my note?"

"Of course I did," said the friend enthusiastically, "I took it to the chemist at once, and he made up the prescription. It has done me a world of good."

Reports.

The Comber Women's League.—The League held a gift sale in aid of the Distressed Aged Ministers' Fund. Mr. Glynne Davies explained the objects of the sale to a good audience at the opening. Mrs. James Andrews in opening the Sale said she could not begin in the usual way by saying how glad she was to be there, because she would have felt happier if Mrs. Thomas Andrews had been able to open the Sale as originally intended. They felt that they all had the greatest sympathy with the object of the sale. It was too sad to think that those who had spent their lives in ministering to the needs of others should come to want in their old age. Often their lives must have many difficulties and disappointments and though there must also be joys and compensations it must be difficult if not impossible to save anything for their old age. She thought they should all do what they could to free them all from anxiety for the future. They had sometimes heard people take it very much for granted that ministers and their wives should go about doing good and say in an off-hand way, "Oh, well, it's their job," but it was usually the sensitive, kind-hearted people with high ideals and aspirations who chose to take on "that job." Mrs. Andrews then wished the Sale success and declared the Bazaar open.

Master Glynne Davies then made a presentation to Mrs. James Andrews and as Mrs. Thomas Andrews was confined to the house through illness a small remembrance was sent to her. Mrs. David Munn in a happy speech thanked Mrs. Andrews for her good services, mentioning that in Comber the name of Andrews was a household word and stood for service, hospitality and kindliness. The name was not now only a local one but was well-known throughout Ulster and Ireland. Mrs. Thompson seconded the vote of thanks which was heartily passed.

Prize-winners in the baking competition were the Misses Helen, Lily, and Gladys Ferguson, Miss Munn, Cattogs House, Miss N. Dugan. The judging was in the hands of Miss Crawford, a member of the Larne congregation.

Xmas Party.

On December 14th, about 100 guests from the other branches of the Women's League were entertained at Comber. After tea, which was served by the Comber members, a programme of songs, recitations, musical monologues and games was enjoyed. Mrs. S. Ervine and Miss Montgomery, Mrs. James Andrews and Miss Taggart were the singers, Miss Orr, the reciter and Mrs. Jackson gave the monologues. The accompaniments were played by Mrs. J. M. Andrews and Miss Murphy. Prizes were won by Miss Armstrong, Mrs. Jackson and Miss M. Lamont and 12 winners in the "Hot Spoons" games. Votes of thanks to the Comber Branch and suggestions for more work for the League were voiced by Mrs. Rossington, Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Johnston, Miss Orr and Miss Armstrong. Mrs. Glynne Davies replied on behalf of the League, putting in a plea for a greater purchase of the NON-SUBSCRIBING MAGAZINE.

Holywood.—The Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held after morning service on Sunday, December 19th...The Chair was taken by Mr. W. Patterson (Chairman of the Committee), who moved the adoption of the Committee's Report and the Statement of Accounts. The latter, owing to extraordinary expenditure, showed a deficit of £42, which the Chairman asked the members to clear. The resolution was seconded by Mr. W. H. Niall Nelson (Hon. Treasurer), who stated that he had received the generous gift of £20 from the Ladies' Sewing Circle towards the payment of the debt and £7 from members of the congregation, to whom their sincere thanks were due. On the motion of Miss R. S. Praeger, seconded by Mr. Hugh Shannon, Mrs. Gardiner, Mrs. Maginnis, Mr. C. C. Greenfield and Mr. F. A. Robinson, were elected members of the Committee, and Mr. W. H. Niall Nelson was re-elected Hon. Treasurer. Mr. James Shannon, junr., Hon. Secretary, and Messrs. W. Patterson and W. J. Harvey as Auditors. On the proposition of Mr. H. Shannon, junr., seconded by Mr. Robert Steele, Mr. F. A. Robinson was re-elected to represent the Congregationa on the Board of Governors of the Sullivan Schools. Votes of thanks were heartily accorded to the members of the church choir, on the motion of Mr. F. A. Robinson, seconded by Mr. C. C. Greenfield, and also to the Ladies' Sewing Circle for their generous gift to the church funds.

Moneyrea.—We were favoured with a visit from Mountpottinger Choir on Friday evening, Dec. 3rd, and they provided excellent fare, for an interested—though, we regret to say, small audience. The first part of the programme was a Christmas Cantata, entitled, "The Morning Star," by John Spencer Camp. It was a delightful experience to hear the voices which harmonised so beautifully, and Mr. Shepherd, the conductor and accompanist, is to be congratulated upon the splendid results of his leadership. There was a naturalness about the singing which was quite in keeping with the spirit of the cantata; and the efficiency of the various singers merits our sincere praise. The Tenor soloist was Mr. Herbert Melling; Soprano Miss A. Beattie; Contralto, Mrs. Ferguson, and Bass, Mr. H. Steene.

The Cantata was followed by a miscellaneous programme in which the following artistes took part:—

Part Song
"The Comrades' Song of Hope."—The Choir
Part Song—
"When the Ebb Tide Flows."—Mr. Steene.
Recitation—
"Miss Edith helps things along."—Miss Elva Orr.
Song—
"The Kerry Dance."—Miss A. Beattie.
Violin Solo—
"The Phantom Melody."—Mr. D. Greenaway.
Song—
"Danny Boy."—Mrs. Ferguson.
Part Songs—
'Sweet and Low," and "The Laughing Chorus."—The Choir.
Recitation—
"The Old Story."—Miss Elva Orr.
Song—
"The Vicar and I will be there."—Mr. Melling.
Violin Solo—
"Passione."—Mr. D. Greenaway.
Part Song—
"A Winter Serenade."—The Choir.

Newtownards.—With the object of assisting the fond for the proposed erection of a Manse, a most successful dance was held in the Pavilion of the Ards Lacrosse Club, kindly lent for the occasion. It was organised by Messrs. Jim Bailie and A. Menown, and proved most enjoyable to a very large crowd. Before midnight tea and cake dis-

tributed by the ladies of the congregation, proved most acceptable. The First Annual Social and Distribution of Prizes of the Sunday School, took place on Saturday afternoon, 11th December. The social was arranged by Mrs. Bailie, Miss E. Ferguson, and Mr. W. M'Millan, Superintendent, and when the young people arrived the ladies of the congregation willingly gave their assistance to those mentioned in making the afternoon as happy as possible. Tea and cake and fruit were dispensed with liberality, and the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and before leaving they were presented with prizes for attendance during the year. It might be mentioned that the church is just closing what has been a most successful year, and the number of pupils attending the Sunday School continue to show a very satisfactory increase.

Mountpottinger.—The first Congregational Social of the season was held on Wednesday, November 24th, when a goodly company assembled. It may be that some of these were drawn by curiosity since it had been arranged that the Committee men should take sole charge of the proceedings. This they managed quite creditably although some ladies were heard to remark that they had been very sparing with the butter. To round off their work a small squad was organised by one energetic worker to do the washing up.

In the intervals between the dances, songs were contributed by Mrs. J. Allen & Rev. M. Watkins, Mrs. E. R. Jackson rendered selections from her repertoire of musical monologues whilst Miss Elva Orr recited. On Friday, December 10th the Annual Sale of Work was held in the Schoolroom when in spite of opposition efforts in the district the result was very gratifying as over £80 was raised.

To the members of the Women's League who worked so hard and to those friends who supported them the Church Committee return grateful thanks.

* * *

A Song for Students.

Mr. John Drinkwater wrote a special song for London University students for the Armistice Day commemoration.

Set to music by John Ireland, the song consists of four verses, which end with the refrain, " O London maids and London men, bring in the golden age again."

The men and woman students sang the song in the quadrangle of University College just after the two-minutes' silence.

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